

**DORNOCH HERITAGE SCIO**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**Tuesday 14 May 2024**

1. **Present:** Alison Davies (Chair), Andrew Senior (Minutes), Jerry Bishop, Fiona McKinlay, Richard Hickson.  
**Apologies:** Fiona Hampton  
**In Attendance:** Peter Wild, Lynne Mahoney
2. **Declarations of Interest:** None
3. **Minutes of meeting held on 12th March**  
Item 4b: 'RH will revise..' amended to 'AD,JB and FH will revise..'  
Item 10b: BiD levy amended to £450 per annum  
The minutes of the previous meeting were otherwise approved.
4. **Matters Arising**  
Item 5a: Access Policy - With modern hearing aids, no need for hearing loops.  
Difficulty noted with trying to listen to TV behind reception due to background noise. AS will provide JB with digital soundbar to trial.
5. **Governance**
  - a. *Museum Financial Reports –FMcK/JB*  
JB presented data to show that in the 12 days since museum re-opening, visitor numbers are up 12% on comparable period for 2023 and admission income up 24% due to rise in price. Also rises in book sales, donations and gift aid.  
However, taking into account, future YCC expenses, outstanding Nancy project signage, MGS Community engagement grant and Heritage Hub pledges, Bank of Scotland current account forecast to be £3799 technically overdrawn. PW and AS agreed to transfer £3000 from DHS funds which may need to be a recurring annual amount.
  - b. *Draft Annual Report to OSCR*  
AD circulated draft report. 'Queens Medal for Gallantry' to be amended to 'Queen's Gallantry Medal'. Otherwise, all in agreement with progress to date,
  - c. *Succession Planning*  
AD and AS met with Wilf Hadley to discuss potential involvement and afterwards both agreed that he would probably be a better fit for one of the subcommittees rather than the Board of Trustees. PW will invite him to be a member of the DHS subcommittee. Several other names put forward as potential trustees or museum committee members and will be approached accordingly.
  - d. *Scheme of Delegation of Authority*  
Draft circulated after revision by AD/FH/JB. The following amendments were approved:  
1.2.2.iv - Remove 'Advising the Board'  
1.4 and 1.5 – Revise numbering  
1.4or5.2 – Remove 'maintenance of petty cash funds' as staff use a float.  
1.6.1. – Remove paragraphs ii and iii and replace with 'Curator may authorise revenue expenditure up to £1000. Fixed contracts and capital expenditure must be approved though the Board of Trustees'.

### 1.6.3 – Remove paragraph

Otherwise approved

## 6. MGS Accreditation

Last carried out in 2017 and current accreditation is timetabled for June 2024. LM currently working through documentation and uploaded policies. Forward plan will need to be reviewed and added to as necessary by Museum Committee.

JB currently reviewing CCTV for security in extension.

John Barnes had queried with MGS need for paper copies of accession register but has been advised that bound archival copy still required with a second paper copy at a second site. JB suggested approaching the library to see if this could be stored there. LM to action.

## 7. SCIO Policies and Staff contracts

FMcK reported that SCIO Policies up to date

Staff contracts are ready for staff to be consulted on and to be signed. LM to provide job descriptions.

## 8. Heritage Hub/Museum Upgrading update

### a. *Grant Funding Update*

SSE application unsuccessful. Will be open again later in year but previously heavily oversubscribed and chances seem low.

Community Regeneration Fund will be open in autumn and will cover revenue costs.

Items such as rack shelving for archive store etc may require later bids to Common Good Fund to achieve.

### b. *Construction costs update/cashflow*

Current progress seems to have slowed – Site meeting planned for tomorrow. Flooring has been delayed due to excess moisture requiring heating to be on continuously. External render looks good and need for mural has been questioned. External slabbing is almost complete and it is envisaged that site should be cleared by the end of the month.

Heritage Hub project funding forecast currently set for £8k surplus.

### c. *New exhibits/display cases etc*

LM is progressing

### d. *Official Opening of Heritage Hub – planning*

Agreed to delay formal opening until the start of the next season (i.e. April 2025) and to see whether a celebrity historian would be available to carry out the official opening. Soft opening could be undertaken towards the end of this season with a preview night for members.

The extension would be available for events such as Gordonstoun Pipe Band (21 June) and then community programme, possible Fibrefest collaboration and Community Curation project on Highland Dancing, prior to official opening.

## 9. Income Generation/consultancy support

Waiting to see the effect of the increased entrance price and income from guided tours. Ann Coombes has offered her services for training for walk co-ordinators.

Contact has been received from Tufts Museum in Pinehurst who are planning to include a display about Historylinks at the USPGA tournament.

Agreed to approach Fiona Sinclair regarding possibility of a half day workshop to look at consultancy, forward/business planning and board strengthening.

## 10. A.O.C.B.

BID – AD attended recent BID meeting and has arranged a separate meeting with Ginny Knox (BID Chair) next week.

## 11. Date of next meeting

2 July 2024, 10.30am at Historylinks Museum Community Room